

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03
ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 ICA-11 TRSE-00
NSC-05 DODE-00 AGRE-00 COME-00 /079 W
-----121578 131343Z /53

P R 131519Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0023
INFO USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 12131

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, US, FR
SUBJ: WASHINGTON NATO SUMMIT: FRENCH PARTICIPATION

REFS: A. STATE 091069 DTG 082051Z APR '78.
B. USNATO 03675 DTG 111315Z APR '78.
C. USNATO 03733 DTG 121756Z APR '78.

1. I WANT TO OFFER A CAUTIONARY NOTE IN REGARD TO THE
QUESTIONS OF FRENCH PARTICIPATION AT THE FIRST DAY
LUNCH AND FRENCH PARTICIPATION AT THE VARIOUS MEETINGS.
PARA 4, REF A, STATES THAT ATTENDANCE AT THE LUNCH
TO BE HOSTED BY THE PRESIDENT IS TO BE RESTRICTED TO
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT PLUS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

2. PARA 2, REF A, ASKS INTER ALIA WHAT IS ENVISIONED
FOR THE FRENCH? IT GOES ON TO RAISE THE ALTERNATIVE
FORMULA OF "HEADS OF NATIONAL DELEGATIONS," BUT
CAUTIONS THAT THIS COULD BE SEEN AS FRANCE BEING
"REWARDED" FOR GISCARD'S ABSENCE.

3. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD
WILL LEAD THE FRENCH DELEGATION. I THINK IT ENTIRELY
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UNLIKELY THAT PRIME MINISTER BARRE WILL GO. IF THE
GUIDANCE IN REF A STANDS AND GUIRINGAUD IS NOT INVITED
TO THE PRESIDENT'S LUNCH, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT AS A
RESULT OF WHAT THE FRENCH WOULD VIEW AS AN INTENDED
SLIGHT, THE FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD NOT GO TO WASHING-
TON AT ALL.

4. THIS STRIKES ME AS THE LEAST DESIRABLE OUTCOME, AS ONE AIM OF OUR POLICY TOWARDS FRANCE IS TO TRY TO BRING IT CLOSER TO NATO, NOT TO WIDEN THE GAP. ADMITTEDLY, GISCARD'S ABSENCE UNDERCUTS THE IMAGE OF ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY. BUT, IN THE INTERESTS OF MINIMIZING GOF PROBLEMS WITH NATO PARTICIPATION AND AVOIDING THE PUBLIC SPECTRE OF FRENCH MINISTERIAL ABSENCE, I RECOMMEND THAT THE LUNCH PROBLEM BE SOLVED EITHER BY INVITING DELEGATION HEADS OR, AS A SECOND PREFERENCE, BY EXPANDING THE PRESIDENT'S LUNCH TO INCLUDE FOREIGN MINISTERS.

5. WITH REGARD TO SCHEDULING TOPICS OVER TWO DAYS WITH A VIEW TOWARDS FRENCH ATTENDANCE, I DO NOT WANT TO INTERFERE IN A LOGICAL ORDER OF BUSINESS. BUT I WOULD ASK THAT WASHINGTON BEAR IN MIND THAT THE PROPOSAL APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT (IN REF A) WHICH WOULD DEVOTE THE SECOND DAY TO THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM (LTDP) WOULD CAUSE THE LEAST TROUBLE FOR THE FRENCH. THEY ARE NOT GOING TO PUBLICLY IDENTIFY FRANCE WITH THE LTDP BY ATTENDING SESSIONS DEVOTED TO IT.

HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ORGS, MEETING OBSERVERS, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS12131
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780159-0195
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780461/aaaabzsn.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f5ef39b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 91069, 78 USNATO 3675, 78 USNATO 3733
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2982131
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON NATO SUMMIT: FRENCH PARTICIPATION
TAGS: PORG, MPOL, US, FR, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f5ef39b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014